

## The history of the Church

The following extract is taken from the History of the Church by Mairi MacArthur. 1973

It has always been considered an impossibility by those who originated the Presbyterian congregation in Sheffield to fix on any one particular as the cause of the starting of the congregation. There existed at the time a strong feeling on the subject in the minds of a few individuals who had been members of Presbyterian churches in Scotland, and it so happened that just when this feeling was about to be given expression to the Reverend George W. Adams, of Leeds, paid a visit to Sheffield with the view of ascertaining what church accommodation existed for the soldiers of a Scottish Regiment about to remove from Leeds to Sheffield. In the kind providence of God, Mr. Adams was brought into contact with a few of those individuals who were longing for the establishment of a church in which they might worship God after the form of their Presbyterian fathers, and the consequence was a more decided inclination to attempt the formation of a congregation.

"In the beginning of the year 1853 this feeling had spread so far as to justify the parties interested in calling a meeting of those likely to be friendly to the object contemplated. This meeting was accordingly held in the Royal Hotel on the 12th January 1853. The object of the meeting as stated in the minutes, was "To take into consideration the propriety of establishing a Presbyterian Church in Sheffield in connection with the Presbyterian Church in England." The Congregation next turned their serious attention to the erection of a church. Previous to the induction of Mr. Breakey £800 was subscribed by members of the Congregation towards the Building Fund, which sum has since been very much increased. A site having been secured on the land of Mr. T. B. Holly, in Hanover Street, Mr. Thomas Flockton was chosen as architect for the church. The plan which he submitted was unanimously adopted by the congregation. The church is estimated to cost £3,000, towards which upwards of £2,000 has been promised. In this sum are included liberal subscriptions from Robert Balfour, Esq., of Manchester, and other friends at a distance, as well as from the annexed lists.

"The foundation stone of the church is fixed to be laid by the Master of the Britannia Lodge of Freemasons (Dr. Wood, one of the Elders of the church) according to the ancient Masonic ceremony, on Tuesday next the 10th July, at 12 o'clock.

The church was erected by James Powell of Brookhill.

The following is an extract from the "Pevsner Architectural Guides: Sheffield",

*St Andrew's United Reformed Church, 1855-6, by Flockton & Son has a tall spire rising out of a short south western tower. The straight-headed side windows make much use of trefoils in the tracery. Dec. style western window. The interior was gutted in 1940. Its replacement is by Teather & Hadfield. Stained glass, 1963 by Donald Robertson.*

The Stained Glass Windows.

There are two stained glass windows

### 1 The Mackie Window

"To the GLORY OF GOD and in gratitude for the lives of all his servants, especially DAVID CABLE MACKIE, F.S.A. (Scot. ), CHARLOTTE FYFFE McDONALD, his wife and their son SYDNEY RUTHWEN, Capt., R.A.M.C. 1962"

The window design recalls the tradition of the foundation of St. Andrews ( town) by St. Regulus. He, as Bishop of Patras, had custody of the body of St. Andrew but learned of a plan by

Constantine V to seize this important holy relic and take it to Constantinople. In a dream - or revelation? - Regulus was told to take certain bones from the body and with an adequate company set sail for the West and establish a shrine where the ship would be wrecked.

This happened at a small headland called in Pictish - "Muckcross" (the promontory of the boar) or in Gaelic - "Kylrimont" (the Church of the King's Hill) and here the shrine was established - probably in association with the Church already there.

The High King of Angus in the 8th century - about to commit his array to battle with a Saxon force - had a vision of St. Andrew and having gained a military victory gave generous grants of land and privileges to the new Church. The adoption of St. Andrew as the Patron Saint of Scotland derives from this. The fame of the shrine and its relics promoted the adoption of the local name St. Andrews, and in the 10th century St. Andrews was made the chief seat of the national bishop; a second Cathedral was consecrated in 1318 and the see became the Archbishopric in 1472 - all implied by the rays of heavenly light in the window. The view depicted shows the ruined cathedral and castle as seen from the pier, itself in part composed of masonry taken from the mouldering cathedral. On it the two red-gowned students are remainders of the University that dates from 1411. Of the large figures of St. Andrew and St. Regulus are of obvious relevance, the third - St. Triduana - was one of the voyagers from Patras who serving a shrine in (present day) Angus accepted the loss of her eyes to escape marriage and separation from her holy task. She was later canonized and became the patron saint of sufferers from eye diseases. Her shrine and the spring that supplied water to bathe affected eyes still exist at Restalrig. The two shields are (on the top left side) the shield of St. Andrews (note the boar) and (on the right) the shield with the burning bush, a symbol of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. The shields at the bottom are personal.

## 2 The Fox Window

This window was presented to the Church by Mr. Cyril Fox and shows the Ascension of our Lord (St. Luke chap. 24 v. 50), supported by angels and surrounded by the disciples. Two pieces of tracery symbolise the Holy Trinity, and the centre piece represents the symbolic hand of God above all. The window was carried out in English antique glass of the very finest quality and bears the reading: "To the GLORY of GOD and in affectionate remembrance of my Beloved Wife ISABELLA FOX Died 2nd March 1963 Pure in heart. Loving. kind and gentle "

This window was designed and made by Mr. Donald Robertson, artist in glass. Glass made by Messrs. Hartley, Wood and Co., Sunderland, the only firm in the country who specialize in handmade and mouth blown glass.

## The Church Windows

All the windows in St. Andrew's Church have been renewed twice since the building was consecrated. The large window above the Gallery was removed and replaced by a stained glass window in 1886 as a Memorial to St. Andrew's first Minister, the Revd. J. Breakey.

The remaining windows in clear diamonds, were replaced in 1932 due to their gradual deterioration by windows of a similar pattern and should have lasted 80 to 100 years. About this time, also, an interesting piece of medieval stained glass was given to the Church by the late Mr. John B. Corrie and restored by the late Mr. T.W.F. Robertson. This was framed and because of its delicate nature, was hung in the Minister's Vestry in front of the existing glass.

Then the night of the great devastation by fire, during an Air Raid, when St. Andrew's along with St. Mark's was gutted. The War Damage Commission was very generous in compensation for the loss of stained glass, and both the large Gallery and the Vestry windows were taken into account.

One of the conditions was that all compensation for glass was to be used on glass, and the architects in their wisdom, decided that all the windows should be glazed in the best quality glass obtainable in simple forms. This was done in Norman slab in rectangular panes, surrounded by a white antique border.

Norman slab was handmade and mouth blown into the shape of square bottles, split down the sides into four pieces, each about 7" x 5". The specification was predominantly streaky yellow, with an occasional streaky green and a plain yellow here and there to prevent monotony - no two pieces are exactly alike.

This glass is no longer made, but the Glazier did lay in some stock at the time in case of accidents in the future.

#### No Monuments

##### Interior features

Further extract from the History By Macarthur. "The most vivid impression was of light and space, the light oak of the pulpit, choir stalls, communion table and chairs, the soaring walls of the chancel with a rose window set high under the roof which is powder blue in colour with golden stars and crossed by brown beams decorated with the cross of St. Andrew. Overall the scent of freshly worked wood, more stimulating than incense. The floor of polished wood blocks"

While the original organ pipes are retained there is a new digital organ designed by Douglas Jones (organist ). The original balcony is no longer used for seating. The tower room is used by The Ethiopian Church. The underfloor heating is still in use. The Hall has polished wooden floors and seating at tables for up to 100 persons. There is a modern 5\* rated kitchen.

#### Patio

Outside at the rear of the Kitchen and garden room area a small patio provides a quiet space for use by all groups including children.